

Position Title: Chair of the Volunteer Leadership Team

Reporting to: Board of Trustees

Organisation: Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees (SWR)

Location: Sevenoaks District

Time Commitment: 7 hours per week

Remuneration: Voluntary Position (Expenses Reimbursed)

Organisation overview

Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees is a local charity formed in March 2017. We are a small but growing charity, whose volunteers and supporters have come together to welcome and help support the refugees who have fled the fighting and persecution in Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine, and are now resettling in our community.

Starting with just one refugee family, we have expanded our efforts over the years and are proud to have supported about 70 families as they settle and rebuild their lives in our community. Currently we support 150 refugees and have over 100 volunteers, of whom 75 provide the service to the refugees. We are completely funded by donations and fundraising.

The role:

To lead SWR's operational team ('the VLT') that helps refugees move from crisis to confidence and citizenship—ensuring every family is supported and nothing important is missed. The team also supports those volunteers assisting the refugees along their path to independence. The VLT is a friendly group of able and energetic people who specialise in different areas of refugee and volunteer support.

What we are looking for:

The VLT is a friendly group of able and energetic people who specialise in different areas of refugee and volunteer support. They need someone who is good at leading teams, who can orchestrate their activities and make sure that nothing important is missed. This also involves being good at working with people and working calmly and methodically through the issues which arise.

What you'll actually be doing:

- Leading the team. Your role is all about supporting and motivating the team around you, helping it to focus on key issues and, as refugee needs change, adjusting the team and building it to address the emerging needs of our refugee community.
- Operational oversight: This is the operational heart of the role. You ensure, with the team, that issues are tracked and resolved.

- Support to the leads: You'll support our specialist leads (which are principally, family, data, housing, employment and language). They are likely to be far more expert in their subject areas but you're their support and sounding board.
- The board liaison: You'll be the voice of the VLT working with the board Chair. As the VLT Chair you are an important voice in setting operational norms and priorities.
- Liaison with other agencies at the operational level such as the Refugee Council.

Is this for you?

- You can deal with people: You have empathy and good judgement to handle difficult situations for volunteers who care deeply, sorting out problems with them while keeping focused on professional outcomes.
- You're naturally organized: You can separate out the important from the less important, the urgent and the non-urgent in juggling resources. You can spot the issue that others may have forgotten.
- You have the capacity: This role may take 7 hours per week, often less but on occasion more.

The handover:

Our current chair is stepping down in August 2026. We'd love a successor to start "shadowing" the Volunteer Leadership Team and the chair's role within it in the late spring or early summer to see how the operational system works to benefit the refugees and meet some of the volunteers who make the services happen.

Why this role matters

Without an effective Chair, small problems can become bigger problems for both the families we support and the volunteers assisting them. You will be the person ensuring operationally that SWR remains a reliable and compassionate support to the refugees, and an excellent place to be a volunteer in. When a refugee or a volunteer reaches out, they are supported by a system that works and people that care.

What will you get:

You will get deep satisfaction and enjoyment from working closely with a deeply dedicated and fun VLT team, as well as the hugely dedicated trustees and wider volunteer membership. You, and your team can see life-changing success stories first-hand, and help shape the future of a lean and highly effective local charity.